LE BULLETIN
Institut Simone de Beauvoir Institute
NEWSLETTER

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February/fevrier 1980
Université Concordia/
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Women's Information and Referral Centre/Centre d'Information et de Reférence pour Femmes (3585 St. Urbain) offers the following on-going discussion series:

POPULAR NUTRITION TOPICS - every Wednesday until March 26, at 1:30 p.m. - Making Yogurt ... What's in a Label? ... A Dozen Ways to Eat Better for Less Money ... Meatless Meals ... Health Foods.

LES FEMMES ET L'ARGENT - tous les mercredis jusqu'au 23 avril, à 20h (pour femmes seulement) - La Déclaration d'Impôt ... Les Valeurs Mobilières et les Placements ... Mieux Vivre et Moins Dépenser ... La Petite Entreprise ... L'Assurance-Vie ...

GROUPE DE DISCUSSION POUR FEMMES - tous les mardis jusqu'au 22 avril, à 20h - Planification Familiale et Avortement ... La Ménopause ... Les Hommes et le Mouvement de Libération des Femmes ... Séparation et Divorce ...

Information: 842-4781.

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Programs for Women, Centre for Continuing Education, Dawson College:

Workshops - Saturday, March 1: STRESS AND YOUR BODY
Friday, March 7 & Saturday, March 8: MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS
Wednesdays, March 19 & 26: MAKING THINGS HAPPEN (community involvement)

Courses - Sundays, March 2 to 23: FINDING OUT ABOUT CONSUMER RIGHTS
Wednesdays, March 5 to 26: RETURNING TO SCHOOL--WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS?

Information: Lanie Melamed, 866-0268.

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Y.W.C.A. Montreal Women Running/Club de course pour femmes de Montréal:

Saturday, March 8, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.: WOMEN'S RUNNING CLINIC/ATELIER POUR LA FEMME ET LA COURSE A PIED with/avec: Ellen Agger, Hélène Cantlie, Suzanne Denis, Jacqueline Gareau, Abby Hoffman, Medhi Jaouhar, Heather Lightfoot. $3.00.

Information: 866-9941, ext./poste 30.

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Pioneer Women's Organization - NA'AMAT:

Thursday, March 6: MAKING YOUR MONEY WORK FOR YOU with Dian Cohen, economist, journalist, broadcaster. $1.50. 1:00 p.m., 3rd Floor, 4770 Kent Ave., Montreal. Offered in conjunction with the National Council of Jewish Women.

Thursday, March 13: ARE WE REALLY LIBERATED? (International Women's Day program) - Guest Speakers: Ora Namir, M.K., Chair, Committee of Education and Culture, Committee for the Status of Women; Anne Gross, BA, BCL, lawyer, Chair, Public Affairs, Women's Federation. $5.00. 11:30 a.m., Congregation Beth-El, 1000 Lucerne Road, T.M.R.

Information: 735-1679.

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Montreal Lakeshore University Women's Club:

Friday, March 14: BOOK FAIR. 2:00 to 8:00 p.m., Stewart Hall, Pointe Claire.

Information: 695-8504.

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Simone de Beauvoir Institute:

Saturday, March 15: MODES OF FEMINISM/LES MULTIPLES VISAGES DU FEMINISME. Theme: "Making a Difference - Women in Politics." Speakers: Muriel Duckworth, President, Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women; Thérèse Casgrain, Senator. Workshops: Routes to a Political Career: Initiative or Invitation? ... Grass Root Political Organization: Limits to Voluntarism ... The Non-Francophone Woman in Quebec Politics: End or Beginning? ... Women and the Law: Enforcing Equality ... Rights for the Aging. $2.50 (includes lunch). 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Faculty Club, Concordia University, 1455 de Maisonneuve West. Day care and Children's Program provided.

Information: 482-0320, ext. 715.

Thursday, March 20: FILM The Far Shore, directed by Joyce Welland. English, French sub-titles. 8:00 p.m., 1455 de Maisonneuve West, Room H-110.

Friday, March 21: Françoise d'Eaubonne, well-known French feminist and author, will speak on FEMINISM-ECOLOGY: REVOLUTION OR MUTATION? 4:00 p.m., 1455 de Maisonneuve West, Room H-435.

Information: 879-8521.

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Creative Aggression for Women:

Saturday, March 22: WORKSHOP on how to direct and use repressed aggression creatively and productively. Led by Miriam Bercovitz. $30.00.

Information: 481-2826.

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THIS ISSUE

Editor: Sharon H. Nelson
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Nancy Humber

GETTING IT TOGETHER

Better late than never, here it is--the first issue of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute's BULLETIN/NEWSLETTER for the '79-'80 year. Getting it together involved a great deal of haste, hard work--and enjoyment, which we hope you'll share. A second issue is already in the works, and we would be very happy to include material from you. Creative work, reviews, news, insights, and information of interest to women are most welcome. Also, if you know of any upcoming events for women, please send or 'phone them in: our "Calendar" will be a regular feature.

In this issue, we include a sneak preview of new Women's Studies offerings for 1980-81 and a list of courses for this summer. "Statut de la femme" is a hard look at the situation of women in Canada, and a call to action. Claudette Branchard tells us what it's like to be a woman "ad-man" in the hectic world of journalism. "Women in the Work Force: Concordia 1980" examines the position of support staff in the university. Principal Mair Verthuy gives us an overview of activities at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute this year, including two events to keep in mind for March.

For the next issue, I look forward to "getting it together" with you. Give me a call at 482-0320, ext. 715 with your ideas, comments, and suggestions. Articles (no longer than 600 words, please) may be sent to me at:

Simone de Beauvoir Institute
Concordia University
7141 Sherbrooke Street West
Montreal, P.Q. H4B 1R6.

The submissions deadline for our second issue is Friday, March 7--so hijack the nearest 'phone booth, dust off your typewriter, and share a piece of your mind!

Helen

Helen Rezanowich

WOMEN'S STUDIES AT CONCORDIA

Women's Studies is a relatively new discipline for the university world and therefore much of the work is still experimental. The aim of courses in a Women's Studies program is, on the whole, to raise questions, to stimulate thinking, and to provide some tools for analysis. At Concordia, the program as a whole is pluralistic; students are encouraged to become familiar with a variety of approaches to issues. It is therefore not surprising that a number of new courses, to be offered in 1980-81, will be cognate courses.

The new offerings in Sociology will be "Sociology of Sex Roles," "The Family," and "Sociology of the Body." Anthropology will offer "Social Definition of Women in Cross-Cultural Perspective," and Psychology will offer "Psychology of Art and Play," "Sex Role Socialization," "Social Competence," and "Human Sexuality." In addition to these cognate courses, the Economics Department will offer a course which examines the economics of discrimination, and, for those interested in literature, a new course about 18th century women scholars will be available next year as well.

The joining together of what were two separate programs on two campuses has made it possible to offer a wide variety of courses and to put students in touch with teachers who come from a variety of backgrounds and whose interests are broad and numerous. It is now possible for undergraduates in Arts to register for a major or a minor in Women's Studies in combination with studies in any other area of the Arts Faculty. For those who are not interested in a degree program or who already have a degree, a certificate program is offered. A Certificate in Women's Studies involves taking 30 credits in Women's Studies and is available either before or after a B.A.

There will be courses offered in both day and evening Summer Sessions this year. Courses to be offered are:

Evening Summer Session 1980

	Instructor
Religion 333 (3 credits) "Women & Religion I" 12 May - 10 June	Monique Dumais
Religion 334 (3 credits) "Women & Religion II" 16 June - 17 July	Norma Joseph
Education 390 "Current Issues in Education" 10 May - 12 June	T.B.A.

Day Summer Session 1980

English 251 (3 credits) "Women in Literature I" Special Subject: Canadian Women 2 July - 22 July	Patricia Morley

continued...

Day Summer Session 1980 (continued)

	Instructor
English 252 (3 credits) "Women in Literature II" Special Subject: Contemporary Canadian Novelists 23 July - 12 August	Patricia Morley
French 493 (6 credits) "Advanced Studies in French" Special Subject: Marie-Claire Blais 2 July - 12 August	Gabrielle Frémont

For information about these or other courses or about the Women's Studies Program, contact Professor Sheila McDonough at 879-8523 or Professor Rose Tekel at 879-8524

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STATUT DE LA FEMME

En tant que féministes ayant accès aux véhicules importants que sont l'Institut Simone de Beauvoir et l'Université Concordia, nous avons une responsabilité d'éveiller la conscience féministe. Il est surtout important que nous ne prenions pas pour acquis que le féminisme est une chose connue et vécue, particulièrement par les jeunes filles et jeunes femmes de nos polyvalentes, CEGEPs et universités.

Dix années après le rapport Byrd, ou en sont les femmes au Canada? En vue des élections du 18 février 1980, le Conseil consultatif de la situation de la femme (Ottawa) avait préparé un dossier sur certains aspects de la condition féminine, afin d'encourager les électrices à interroger les candidats sur la politique de leur parti dans ce domaine. Le tableau qui en ressort est assez noir. Peu de progrès, même un certain recul. Réfléchissons et faisons réfléchir sur les quelques données ci-dessous, tout en tenant compte que les femmes sont majoritaires de plus de 3% en ce pays.

1. 8.3% de la main-d'oeuvre féminine est au chômage contre 6.6% chez les hommes.
2. En moyenne, les femmes qui travaillent à temps plein gagnent 60% de ce que gagnent les hommes.
3. Dans la fonction publique fédérale, les femmes occupent majoritairement les postes au bas de l'échelle.
4. Les amendements à la loi sur l'assurance-chômage pénalisent les travailleurs à temps partiel, donc surtout les femmes.
5. A l'heure actuelle, plus d'un demi-million d'enfants en bas âge dont la mère travaille à l'extérieur ne trouvent pas de place dans les garderies.
6. D'après l'acte des Indiens, les femmes amérindiennes perdent leur statut en épousant un non-Indien. Le contraire ne s'applique pas aux hommes.

Nous vous invitons donc à vous regrouper, au sein de l'Institut ou à l'extérieur, afin que nous ne perdions pas de vue que ces problèmes existent en 1980, et que les changements qui s'imposent soient entrepris les plus tôt possible.

"BUT CAN SHE TYPE? YOU BETCHA!"

by Claudette Branchard

Being a part-time secretary in the advertising department of a student newspaper is more fun than I expected it to be. The work is interesting and varied, ranging from typing and accounting to planning promotional campaigns. The hours are flexible. There is very little routine in a newspaper operation. The atmosphere is warm and friendly, and the glamour associated with the field of advertising is probably justified, as, like all sales-related work, there is a lot of human contact.

By now, most people acknowledge that it takes many talents to be a good secretary. It is demanding and hard work. To combine it with full-time studies takes physical, emotional and intellectual stamina. I work at this job for minimum wage and the privilege of using the unglamourous title "Advertising Secretary," except when the financial interests of the paper warrant using "Accounts Receivable Manager" or even "Assistant Manager". The material considerations are unimportant to me now, but for a permanent worker they might be unacceptable.

Perhaps surprisingly, sexual discrimination is not a problem where I work. Sexism is officially banned in Article IV, Section A, of the newspaper's constitution. Happily for me, this edict is strictly observed and egalitarianism is put into practice, even for secretaries.

I feel that I am respected by my colleagues. I have both written for the paper and done its housekeeping for the past 6 months, and I am considered the writer who is the secretary rather than the other way around. My willingness and ability to cooperate with the business manager and to cope with the chronic problem of delinquent accounts is valued as an important contribution to the paper.

If I experience any manifestations of sexism, it is from our customers. On the phone, most will usually ask to speak to my boss, no matter how trivial their problem. Most are relieved that I can help them, since our deadlines could mean a missed ad if their specifications are not relayed on time. A few die-hards still insist that I "have the Boss call me when he arrives, Sweetheart."

Secretaries calling for their bosses often refuse to deal with me, insisting that "Mr. B. prefers that I deal with the Ad manager himself." This is usually untrue, since Mr. B. neither knows nor cares with whom she deals as long as his ad gets printed. Many women simply don't trust other women. They apparently prefer to perpetuate sex roles by having me take down Mr. B.'s name and number on my little yellow message pad with a sisterly reminder to "leave it in a spot where the boss can't miss it." These paragons of efficiency fail to realize that I have taken to keeping my yellow contract pad, rather than the yellow message pad, near the phone.

Having been a clerical worker in five other small, medium, and large companies, I know only too well what Louise Kapp Howe dubbed "The Pink Collar Syndrome." Ladies' lounge chatter in one company invariably revolved around how many years one had to "put in" before one's husband earned anough to support the family as was his God-ordained duty. Many of these women had small children who were being raised by their grandmothers for want of affordable day care. Small wonder that such women cannot

trust me with the details of their bosses' ad campaigns. If I too were "doing time," would I care enough to make sure that the information be handled properly?

Many firms of all sizes could take some lessons in employee relations from the "amateur" operation where I now work. Women need not totally abandon their traditionally female jobs in order to regain their self-esteem and their trust in other women, but their contribution to the system as a whole needs to be re-examined and appreciated. I do not mean to imply that firms should strive to produce offices full of company Superwomen with only the ruffles of their pink collars peeking out from the jackets of their gray-flannel-suits; that is just another form of manipulation. Appreciation, however, does mean more than observing National Secretaries' Week with a bunch of flowers for that girl the boss just cannot do without.

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WOMEN IN THE WORK FORCE: CONCORDIA 1980

About a year ago the university attempted to normalize, in accordance with government guidelines, the situation of support staff, and to institute a classification system to bring salaries and classifications into line with those of other Quebec universities. The reclassification has been a university-wide disaster at many levels, and it is at the root of a number of grievances.

There are a number of really funny stories about administrators getting caught in the reclassification net, finding themselves suddenly unable to do their jobs because in the new scheme they are entitled neither to an office, a secretary, nor a telephone. Such anomalies have been quietly dealt with somehow, but no announcements have been made about how. Secretaries and administrative assistants who have found themselves in similarly anomalous situations have had no recourse but to take the often-proferred advice to quit. For many senior support personnel this means walking away from accrued benefits and pensions, from the niches they have made for themselves within the university community over many years. They also recognize the advantages of working at a university, and cite free education, generous vacation and holiday schedules, and excellent medical and life insurance plans, as well as the pleasures of working with students.

Foremost in many minds at the moment, however, is the basic lack of rights and representation accorded to support staff, the lack of consultation about reclassification, and a complete lack of channels through which "feed-back" about working conditions might be sent to decision-making bodies. While the university sought to normalize classifications, it neglected to set up feasible grievance procedures, or to institute formal, or even informal means by which information and opinions could be transferred, by those whose daily lives are affected by decisions and policies, to those who make the decisions.

The situation is most trying for, and most deleterious to those who have been members of the university community for the greatest number of years. For them, the lack of consultation and discussion are major grievances. They are also the people most adversely affected by the salary freeze which followed reclassification. The situation is particularly painful because the university continues to keep some support positions "unclassified." "Reclassification" therefore becomes punitive rather than normative, and makes a mockery of administrative claims to an effort to fairly reapportion resources among support staff.

A large proportion of support staff is women. Although the term does include all non-teaching and non-professional employees of the university with the exception of maintenance workers, the term also provides a certain amount of obfuscation in that it is in large measure a euphemism for secretaries and administrative assistants.

The reclassification plan was based on job descriptions which were provided by "support staff" to the personnel office. These job descriptions were between 3 and 5 years out of date by the time reclassification was a fait accompli. Anyone who has ever worked in an office will know that in 3 years a secretarial job can change enormously, and usually both the duties and responsibilities grow. Reclassification did not take these changes into account. The real work situations of secretaries and administrative assistants were not investigated, and no facilities were established for information to be transferred to personnel officers about changes in working situations or jobs. Changes were virtually ignored. This high-handedness and lack of consultation has cost the university, and that means all of us who work or study here, dearly in good will.

The whole situation has been exacerbated by the recent cost of living increase to support staff. It was 3.5%. CUFA's reaction to twice that was the equivalent of a belly laugh, even though 7% of $25,000 is considerably more than 3.5% of $12,000. With inflation about 13% and inflation in the cost of "necessities" considerably higher, a 3.5% "cost of living increase," particularly to a secretarial salary, is the equivalent of a pay cut.

The salary situation is complicated by the possible addition of "merit increases." From the perspective of support staff, such increases are a reflection of the condescension and arbitrariness with which they are treated generally by the administration. Decisions about "merit" are made by people who often do not know a secretary's responsibilities nor even what is and what is not a part of her job. The decision-making procedure leaves a great deal of scope for personal prejudice and vengeance. No support staff is consulted, and decisions can be reversed arbitrarily at any level. There is no appeal.

Concordia support staff met this month to discuss these and other problems, and working conditions in general. The meeting took place at St.James Church, on Monday, 25 February.

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ACTIVITÉS - INSTITUT SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR

par Mair Verthuy

L'Institut Simone de Beauvoir entamera bientôt sa troisième année d'existence.

Cette troisième année s'ouvrira sur un colloque d'envergure nationale, "Talking Together/Parlons-en". Mais nous ne nous engageons pas uniquement dans des activités de cette dimension-là, bien que ce colloque soit appelé à souligner non seulement notre désir d'encourager une réflexion intellectuelle et socio-politique sur la condition de la femme mais aussi notre volonté de faciliter les échanges entre milieux francophone et anglophone.

Nos activités reflètent la diversité ou la polyvalence des membres, de toutes les femmes à l'Université, comme de celles qui se trouvent à l'extérieur.

nous avons pu offrir des ateliers aux femmes qui retournent aux études après une absence; sur le corps de la femme; sur les mathématiques démystifiées; sur la protection financière des femmes; j'en passe. Des conférencières nous ont parlé du Deuxième Sexe, de l'écriture au féminin, du coût des tâches ménagères, de la religion. Nous projetons des vidéos réalisés par Vidéo-Femmes de Québec ainsi que des longs métrages tels que D'abord Ménagères de Luce Guilbeault, et The Far Shore de Joyce Welland, chaque projection étant suivie d'un débat. Pour vous tenir au courant de nos activités, passez à l'Institut, surveillez les annonces dans les journaux étudiants ou dans le Thursday Report. Notre budget nous interdit, hélas, d'envoyer à chaque fois des lettres.

Mais j'aimerais attirer votre attention sur deux événements importants du mois de mars:

1. Modes of feminism II, le 15 mars 1980. Cette journée qui débutera par une table ronde, suivie de plusieurs ateliers, sera consacrée à divers aspects de la politique des femmes. Y participeront des personnes-ressource représentant un certain nombre d'organisations de femmes à l'extérieur de l'Université, ce qui nous permettra de faire le pont entre nos études et le vécu quotidien des femmes engagées dans une action plus directe.

2. Conférence de Françoise d'Eaubonne, le 21 mars à 16h dans la salle H-435. Madame d'Eaubonne, féministe française chevronnée, la première personne à faire une étude sérieuse du Deuxième Sexe, auteur de nombreux romans et essais, fondatrice du mouvement Féminisme-écologie, nous parlera de Féminisme-écologie/Révolution ou mutation?

Nous espérons vous voir lors de ces deux rencontres. Surtout, il faut commencer de penser à nos activités de l'année prochaine. Nous les souhaiterions aussi diversifiées que cette année, mais cela dépend de vous. Faites-nous savoir ce qui vous intéresse; nous sommes là pour vous aider à définir vos objectifs pour vous aider à organiser des événements.

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Articles, or information for the Calendar may be submitted to Helen Rezanowich at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Concordia University, 7141 Sherbrooke Street West. All material will be welcome. The editors reserve the right to copy edit or abbreviate material.